

Reference # 15000038

SHPO

ENTERED FEB 23 2015

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1720 Willey Avenue/ 2306 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street

City or town: Cleveland State: OH County: Cuyahoga

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A     B     C     D

<p><u>Barbara Power</u> DSHPO Inventory &amp; Registration <u>12/31/2014</u></p>	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

<u>Contributing</u> <u>1</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u> _____	<u>buildings</u>
_____	_____	<u>sites</u>
_____	_____	<u>structures</u>
_____	_____	<u>objects</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Total</u>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**  
**Historic Functions**

COMMERCE/TRADE: Warehouse  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Industrial Storage  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

VACANT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

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### Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Reinforced Concrete, Stone and Terra Cotta Coping

### Narrative Description

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building is located at 1720 Willey Avenue / 2306 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Cleveland, Ohio, in Cuyahoga County. The reinforced-concrete Commercial-style cold storage building was designed for the Fairmont Creamery Company of Nebraska and constructed by Gordon and Mayer Construction Company of Cleveland in 1930.

The property is situated on a 1.55 acre triangular-shaped lot. The reinforced concrete building is built into the side of a hill at the corners of Willey Avenue and West 17th Street, with the façade fronting West 17th Street. The building, occupying approximately 107,000 square feet, is located adjacent to the Nickel Plate Railroad. This proximity allowed railcars from Chicago to deliver directly into the receiving room platform of the Cleveland distribution plant via an industrial spur. The building is composed of two wedge-shaped building sections, the main four-story and cold storage section with a partial basement and the smaller two-story and full basement garage annex, with the acute angle parallel to the railroad tracks. Four stories of the cold storage section are expressed on the railroad side and the building is buried into the hill side, with the façade located along West 17th Street revealing only the two top stories. The building is designed in the style of commercial warehouse using reinforced concrete structural bays revealed on the exterior that are composed of red brick and steel industrial fenestration. The brick window openings are defined by concrete sills. The originally industrial steel sash were replaced with CMU infill when the buildings was vacated in 1982 and new industrial style aluminum sash were reinstated in recent years.

#### Integrity

The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building demonstrates common deterioration and minor modifications due to thirty years of vacancy. The building retains a significant level of historic architectural integrity. This is exhibited in both exterior and interior architectural elements such as the fenestration pattern, reinforced concrete and masonry along with the Fairmont Creamery white glazed brick letter and façade Art-deco motifs at the parapet and main entrance. The interior structural elements demonstrate the retention of historic fabric, materials, and craftsmanship, representing the manufacturing aspects of the design intent, specifically

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noting the round and square mushroom columns and glazed tile. The building remains in its historic location and the general architectural language retains the historic feeling and association as noted in historic images of the building in its original historic setting.

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## **Narrative Description**

### **EXTERIOR (photos :1-13)**

The garage annex and cold/dry storage warehouse are combined to create a four-story building (photo: 1). The garage is two-stories with a full basement and is most visible from the south elevation. The basement is above grade at the southwest corner where there is street access to Willey. The south elevation provides additional dock access at the first floor garage level, with a raised concrete platform and garage openings. The garage is attached seamlessly to the cold and dry storage sections of the building at the first floor. The main building employs reinforced mushroom column construction, while the garage employs a one-way cast in place reinforced concrete frame system. The garage is separated from the storage area by an interior historic ramp which runs from the first floor to the second floor of the garage annex where it meets the cold storage portion. The storage areas continue on the second floor with a vehicular shipping dock on the third floor fronting West 17th Street. The fourth floor includes both the administrative offices and storage areas. The commercial style building is defined by the skeleton frame reinforced concrete structure, which is in-filled with red-orange brick and industrial style steel sash, with dock doors and platform elements on the south, east and west elevations.

The West 17th Street east facade is two-stories in height (third and fourth floors) with nine bays (photos: 2 and 4). The two end bays are articulated with a brick pediment and capped with stone coping. The center of the pediment is decorated with simple stone elements cut in rectangular and diamond shapes. The flanking piers have five white-glazed square bricks. The center bay projects slightly and includes "THE FAIRMONT CREAMERY CO." spelled in white glazed brick. The third floor, which is at grade on the east elevation, is composed of reinforced concrete with the seven bays serving as dock openings and are the defining feature. The northern-most bay served as the retail outlet with a man door and display window. The office entry door is in the second bay from the south end (photo: 3). The doorway is articulated with formed concrete reminiscent of quoining.

The building, which sits on a hillside and is adjacent to railroad tracks, has a curious corner where the south and west elevations converge. The angle of the railroad creates a small flatiron effect at the southwest corner that is articulated with concrete banding and window openings (photo: 11). A garage door is located at the basement and a retaining wall, constructed for the railroad bridge across Willey, abuts the building to the west.

The angled west elevation is adjacent to the railroad. The railroad level, or first floor, is recessed to form a platform and large round concrete columns support the overhanging building above (photos: 6-8). The receiving and shipping platform is 8' wide and is above grade approximately 3 ½', which allowed products to be easily moved from the cars to the platform. The center door

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at the platform level provides direct access to the elevator to move the products up vertically to upper floor cooler spaces. Three hoist beams extend out from the roof to provide additional assistance for freight manipulation. A second glazed brick sign, reading "THE FAIRMONT CREAMERY CO." is placed in the parapet along the west elevation (photos: 9-10).

The north and south sides blend into the hillside, with a roof refrigerator penthouse located centrally along the south elevation (photos: 5 and 12). Additional dock doors and ramp are also located along the south elevation of the garage annex. Another vehicular entrance to the third floor of the garage annex is located on the north elevation of the annex, at the southwest corner of the cold storage portion (photo: 13). This portion of the garage annex is set back six bays from the façade and is only one-story above grade due to the hillside. It has a central garage door with concrete banding at the parapet and flanked by solid brick bays.

**INTERIOR (photos: 14-25)**

The building is defined by two areas, the garage annex which is to the south of the main building and includes portions of the basement through the second floor and the main building that runs from the basement to the fourth floor. The garage is located on the basement, first, and second floors with an interior vehicular ramp located along the wall that separates the garage annex from cold storage portions leading to the second floor, and out to West 17th Street (photos: 16-17). The second through the fourth floor of the warehouse section contain dry and cold storage areas and office spaces. The building has three freight elevators and five sets of stairs. At the office stair, noted as Stair #2, decorative metal railing remains intact and is detailed on the historic architectural drawings (photo: 25).

The interior of the building consists of thick reinforced concrete floors, pitched to drains to allow for easy cleaning. The perimeter walls are orange glazed brick on floors two through four to aid with cleaning and sanitation needs. In the ice cream washing area (as noted on historic drawings) and in the milk receiving retail space on the third floor, the brick is white glazed. Cooler spaces are located towards the center of the building, while dry storage, offices and employee functioning rooms, such as locker rooms and bathrooms, located along the perimeter. The mushroom columns and capitals in the cooler areas are square (photo: 15). This differential between square columns and capitals for use in cold verse round column and capitals (photos: 19-21) in dry storage areas is consistent throughout the building design. It is the most prominent interior architectural feature distinguishing the historic use of the building. The square design allows proper air circulation, which was one of the four design considerations for a cooler. The other three elements are ventilation, humidity, and absorbents. The remaining columns and capitals in the building are round mushroom columns. Interior defined spaces in the building were a combination of freezer coolers, cold storage and dry storage, along with office and administrative areas (photo: 23), shipping and receiving. Various storage spaces with different storing processes and temperatures existed to accommodate the wide variety of perishable goods the company produced including butter, egg, milk, ice cream, poultry, and dry goods. The interior cooler walls were lined with cork encased in plaster. The reinforced concrete columns were either lined with cork, finished in plaster or were finished with a painted surface which had high gloss sheen, for sanitary purposes. The cork and plaster deteriorated off the walls and

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columns during the years the building was vacant. Throughout the building the floors are concrete which is pitched to floor drains. Some of the cooler spaces had built-up cork flooring which was covered with hardwood flooring. Other areas have tile flooring with wall base tile along the perimeter of the rooms and at the base of columns.

The basement of the building housed the garage and boiler (photo: 14) and served as an additional garage floor for the delivery trucks. The area remains intact. The first floor is partially occupied by the garage and historic ramp (photos: 16-17) with access to the shipping and receiving platform located along the railroad tracks. These areas retain historic character, including garage and door openings. The historic drawings indicate locations for future coolers including an unnamed cooler along the west wall, an egg cooler in the center and a butter cooler along the south wall. Only the center egg cooler was constructed based on existing evidence of paint on the columns and remnants of cork. The egg cooler no longer exists.

The second floor cold and dry storage areas are the most intact (photos: 19-21). The second floor is below ground along the north and east elevation, which would help keep this area at the ambient ground temperature of 65 degrees, minimizing the fluctuations needed to maintain the cooler temperatures. The can storage area along the south wall remains intact and has glazed orange brick, and the columns are painted and finished with a high sheen. The egg cooler and handling areas are centrally located and remain intact, although the cork and plaster has crumbled off the walls in the cooler. The milk department is located in the northern section of the second floor and includes the milk pump room. A tunnel, which has since been sealed off, is located on the east wall and supposedly leads to the garage across the street.

The third floor was a combination of dry good, sales offices, retail outlet, truck docks (photo: 22), and cooler spaces. The retail outlet space, located in the northwest corner, has white glazed brick and red tile laid in a herringbone pattern. The bottle and ice cream washing area remain intact. At the base of the columns a red bull nose tile, which only occurs in this section of the building, helps to distinguish the washing areas from the rest of the spaces. The perimeter wall in the ice cream washing area is white glazed brick. The other spaces remain intact and include the city sales shipping floor, the butter poultry and cheese coolers, the dry storage and locker rooms areas, all located in the south portion. The receiving cooler off of the vehicular shipping dock has been demolished.

The fourth floor houses the administrative offices which run along the east wall, facing West 17th Street. They include a large open space with two private offices, a records room, and women's and men's bathrooms; all finished in orange glazed brick. The offices adjoin the print room which runs along the south wall (photo: 23). The churn room is intact and is located along the west wall. Remnants remain of the laboratory and starter room. The milk processing room remains intact and also has the red tile bull nose base. The cooler associated with the milk processing room is demolished. The two central freezers have been demolished. The ice tank room is located on the roof and is intact.

The Fairmont Creamery Company changed its name to Fairmont Foods in 1947 and in 1980 merged with American Financial Corporation. The building was sold on July 7, 1983 after the

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company closed the facilities. The building has been mostly vacant since. The building design is very similar to other Fairmont Creamery Company buildings located in other states. The commercial style building retains exterior elements that give the impression of strength through the reinforced concrete structure with a conservative amount of classical detail on the facade. The interior retains the architectural language typical of a warehouse with glazed brick perimeter masonry walls, mushroom columns with both round and square capitals, large freight elevators, and interior vehicular ramping for transporting dairy goods about the facility. The warehouse, located along the Nickel Plate Railroad, Cleveland's freight railway system, was designed to accommodate the heavy load of dairy products and efficient distribution of the perishable goods to the market.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE  
TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1930-1964  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Gordon and Mayer Construction Company

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### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream is significant under **Criterion A in the area of Commerce** as representative of the change in the dairy industry from the local production of goods to the formation of large national conglomerates during the first half of the twentieth century. This facility is one of the only remaining Ohio cold storage distribution centers in Cleveland and the only one built by Fairmont Creamery Company of Nebraska. The building is also significant under **Criterion A in the area of Transportation** as a distribution center constructed in 1930, at the advent of the Depression, located adjacent to a major rail line and also employing a fleet of 75 delivery trucks for Fairmont Creamery Company dairy goods. Fairmont became a nationally ranked dairy producer and Fortune 500 company utilizing new technologies for perishable food for both national and local food distribution logistics via ground refrigeration transportation methods of railcar and trucking fleets prior to the national highway system.

The **period of significance is 1930-1964** beginning in 1930 with construction of the Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building in Cleveland as one of their nationwide locations providing daily distribution to the Greater Cleveland area, and one of two in Ohio; and ending in 1964 based on National Register fifty year guideline. The company continued to operate in the building through 1983 when the company became a wholly-owned subsidiary of American Financial Corporation and closed the Cleveland facility.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### Dairy Industry

Dairy products are a nutritional food source, and eggs, milk and butter are considered staples to the American diet. In 1865 Louis Pasteur invented the pasteurization process for milk, which dramatically reduced pathogens found in the product, lengthening shelf life and increasing the safety of dairy products. In 1924 "Grade A Pasteurization" became recommended federal policy and public health officials recommended daily consumption of milk, one quart per child and one pint daily per adult.<sup>1</sup> Dairy production became industrialized in the early to mid-twentieth century in America with the introduction of improved technologies in refrigeration, both in storage facilities and transportation, and through government public health regulations.

Local dairy companies were a vital part of a community. The dairy farmer would transport his milk daily to nearby towns and ladle the milk into a customer's container.<sup>2</sup> Milk was first bottled in 1879, allowing small dairy farmers a means of "packaging" their product and delivering to an established customer base through daily home delivery service.<sup>3</sup> As the dairy industry grew in the first half of the twentieth century, the largest numbers of cows and dairy

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<sup>1</sup> Cleveland's Milk Supply, 1878-1930 Cleveland: Division of Health, 1930).

<sup>2</sup> Lou and Sue McFadden, Ohio's Dairies (Sugar creek, Ohio: Carlisle Printing, 2007) 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

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herds were located in the Great Lakes region of the U.S. The Great Lakes region was not only suitable for dairy farming but was situated near the consumer population centers of the U.S. at that time. Prior to modern refrigeration and efficient transportation systems, the location of farms near the point of consumption was critical since milk is a highly perishable commodity. As refrigeration and transportation developed in the early part of the twentieth century, the dairy industry was able to expand into markets farther from the source of production. By the 1920s regional dairies began to transform the small dairy into a commercial industry. These commercial creameries and dairies allowed the farmer's products to be closer to the consumers. The facilities would also process the milk into other products such as butter, sour cream, and cheeses. Distribution to market expanded through railcar to distribution centers in urban markets and then to the consumer through refrigerated trucks and home delivery services.

In the late nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century, small groceries did not carry dairy products due to the lack of reliable refrigeration. Home delivery helped creameries avoid the necessity of cold storage and provided a desirable service for their customers. Milkmen originally delivered dairy products using horse and buggy, but with the onset of the automobile, operations became more complex, employing refrigerated trucks which could travel farther and reach a greater customer base. Ice was the common source employed to keep products cool in the home. Refrigeration was first used commercially around the turn of the century and by 1911 domestic refrigerators became available, though they were relatively expensive. Refrigerated railcars were introduced as early as 1840. In 1867, J.B. Sutherland of Detroit, Michigan, patented the refrigerator car which allowed for a greater distance between the food source and the consumer. Refrigerated railcars allowed large amounts of dairy products to travel even greater distances. The advancement in the railroad network and cold storage practices, and later dry ice, along with the invention of a cream separator, permitted creameries to serve larger areas. Later in the second half of the twentieth century people's shopping habits were beginning to change with supermarkets being a major factor in the changing dairy industry. The self-servicing grocery market transformed the merchant lead grocer. Over time the supermarket expanded their products to include perishable items such as meats and dairy. This resulted in the decline of home delivery of dairy products, which largely ceased in the 1970s, and the relocation of dairy products to the supermarket shelf.

### **Cleveland Dairies**

Numerous local dairy companies existed in Cleveland besides Fairmont, with the oldest starting in 1891 as the Maple Grove Farm Dairy Company. Prior to 1939, sale of homogenized milk was prohibited in Cleveland, since the equipment needed could not be thoroughly sterilized. As a result, dairy retailers operating business in the city of Cleveland were required to obtain a permit which prompted inspections by the Division of Health. By 1945, ninety-five (95) dairy and creameries had permit licenses to sell milk in the city of Cleveland. These dairies were small operations located throughout the city. With the onset of legislation and regulation, smaller dairies could not compete and were purchased or operated by national companies. Most of the small companies in Cleveland either ceased business operations or were acquired by one

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of the four national dairy companies; National Dairy, Beatrice, Fairmont and Blue Valley Creamery. Approximately a dozen of the dairy buildings reflecting these companies remain standing throughout the city. These buildings are small at one to two stories in height and are either vacant or reutilized as storage or office space for non-dairy companies. Miller's Gold Seal Dairy, located at 1823-29 East 55<sup>th</sup> Street, sits abandoned. Dairymen's, founded in 1923 and located at 3068 West 106<sup>th</sup> Street is the only remaining Cleveland dairy operating today.

### **History of the Fairmont Creamery Company**

The Fairmont Creamery Company was organized in 1884 by Wallace Wheeler and Joseph H. Rushton in Fairmont, Nebraska. By the 1890s, Fairmont Creamery was operating plants in the towns and cities of Crete, Tobias, Friend, DeWitt, Fairbury, Geneva, Milford, and Hebron, Nebraska, and shipping extensively by iced refrigerated rail cars. By 1907 the company had expanded its operations and had moved its headquarters to Omaha. As part of this rapid growth, the company grew from the locations in Nebraska to surrounding Midwestern states and beyond including locations in Maine, Washington and, Louisiana. The company became one of the largest dairy companies in the country and in 1926 performed an annual business of approximately \$30 million.<sup>4</sup>

Fairmont Creamery Company was known in the dairy industry for its quality control and progressive methods of food production and distribution. They operated by the motto "To make a good product better" and produced more than 30 "Better Food Products." They were the first company to wrap butter with parchment paper, which became a universal practice. They were the first creamery in the United States to use the "Babcock Test", an accurate measure of percentage of butterfat content in cream which also became a standard in the industry.<sup>5</sup> They are believed to have developed the first refrigerated retail delivery truck. In Cleveland, their trucks, known as the "Fairmont Gold Nugget Ice Cream Trucks" were built by the Fortney Body Company located at 441 Train Avenue. The trucks were advertised as "modern in design and efficient to operate".<sup>6</sup>

Seeking greater quality control, the company began to take the Fairmont product line to the national market by serving the market directly. Facilities and outlets were established as early as 1909 in Pittsburgh and continued through the teens to cities such as Spokane, Scranton, Buffalo, Columbus (razed), Boston, and Green Bay. They entered the Cleveland and Detroit markets in the early part of the 1920s and eventually served coast to coast operations and beyond including exporting products to England, Germany, Holland, Argentina, Mexico and Canada.<sup>7</sup> The Nickel Plate Railroad (New York, Chicago & St. Louis) was the national route

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<sup>4</sup> Half A Century, Being a Chronical of Interesting Developments in the Life of the Fairmont Creamery Company – 1884-1934. (50th Anniversary Commemorative, Nebraska, 1934) 39.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>6</sup> "Fairmont Gold Nugget Ice Cream Truck" (Fortney Refrigerator Body Print Ad, 1948)

<sup>7</sup> Half A Century, Being a Chronical of Interesting Developments in the Life of the Fairmont Creamery Company – 1884-1934. (50th Anniversary Commemorative, Nebraska, 1934) 30.

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into Cleveland. It was among the list of major railway routes engaged by Fairmont and included others such as the Baltimore and Ohio Buffalo Creek RR, the Grand Trunk Western RR, the Great Northern RR, Pacific Express Company RR, Illinois Central RR, Fillmore Western RR and Green Bay & Western RR and others for national distribution.

The Fairmont Creamery company came to operate 54 facilities in the state of Ohio. There were twenty (20) plants in cities like Akron, Athens, Dayton, and Youngstown and thirty-four (34) cream stations in smaller towns like Cambridge, Ironton and Tiffin. Almost all of these plants were acquired as existing small operational dairies. The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building in Cleveland is significant as the only plant in Ohio built by the Fairmont Company and represents the Cleveland industrial cold storage facilities of the early twentieth century employing both national and local logistic operations.

In 1929 the company incorporated as Fairmont Creamery Company and expanded their product line to include poultry products and frozen foods. The company continued to expand nationally and by 1934 had 25 manufacturing plants in thirteen states, including the one in Cleveland. Sales offices were located in Chicago, Jacksonville, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Providence and New York. By 1930, the creamery had nearly 3,000 cream stations throughout the United States. There were fifty-four (54) Fairmont plants and cream stations in Ohio at the peak of Fairmont's business. The company, re-branded in 1948 in the post-World War II era as Fairmont Foods, became a Fortune 500 company, gaining a seat on the New York Stock Exchange in 1959. In 1967, Fairmont Foods purchased Utotem, a chain of nearly 350 convenience food stores located in seven states, with headquarters in Houston, Texas. In 1979 negotiations began with American Financial Corporation of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the merger occurred in July of 1980. Between 1980 and 1984, all of the Fairmont Foods properties and subsidiaries were either sold or closed.

### **Distribution – Cleveland as a Hub**

In 1930, Cleveland was ranked the 6<sup>th</sup> largest city in the nation with a peak population of 900,429.<sup>8</sup> Cleveland maintained a dominant position in the United States as a strategic rail center with 150 trains connecting Cleveland to wider markets throughout the United States.<sup>9</sup> Cleveland's Union Terminal began construction in 1919 and was meant to centralize all passenger train railroads.<sup>10</sup> This change also necessitated the relocation of the city's wholesale food industry and rail lines. The new wholesale district was located along the Nickel Plate Railroad and the first large scale cold storage building was constructed in 1927-28 as the Distribution Terminal Warehouse, located at University Road and West 14th Street (razed in 2012). A second large scale cold storage building, the Northern Ohio Food Terminal (only portions remain) opened in Cleveland June of 1929 covering 34 acres between East 37<sup>th</sup> and

<sup>8</sup> Rose, William Ganson, Cleveland The Making of a City (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1950) 873.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 880.

<sup>10</sup> Nancy Campbell, Cleveland's Distribution Terminal Warehouse: The Significance of a Cold Storage Building (Columbus: Ohio Department of Transportation & Ohio Historic Preservation Office, 2010)5.

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East 40<sup>th</sup> Streets, bringing the city into the highest rank among food and vegetable markets, financed by the produce trade and the Nickel Plate Railroad.<sup>11</sup> Both of these large scale cold storage buildings were occupied by multiple wholesale tenants purveying a wide variety of perishable goods. The Federal Cold Storage Company constructed a huge modern cold storage plant adjoining the Terminal, along with the Auction Building which had a capacity for 110 railcars and a Growers Market with accommodations for 375 growers for sale of their produce.

Cleveland's large market and strategic location attracted national dairy companies. The National Dairy Products Corporation entered the market in 1928, purchasing the consolidated Telling-Belle-Vernon, one of Cleveland's oldest dairy companies which operated out of three locations. The Beatrice Company purchased the Blue Valley Creamery Company in 1939. Blue Valley Creamery company, which was located at 1802 East 47th, Street was a Chicago based company. The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building in Cleveland, located at West 17<sup>th</sup> and Willey Avenue, was built to provide efficient distribution of Fairmont goods, specifically ice cream, to the greater Cleveland area. The company had been operating in Cleveland since the early 1920s at the Sheriff Street Market selling butter after acquiring the Medina Creamery Company. They established a permanent location at 608-610 Bolivar Road in 1923. The Fairmont Headquarters in Omaha produced the design of the new distribution plant on the south side of Cleveland, which resembles facilities in Wisconsin and Michigan, to begin distributing their ice cream product line.<sup>12</sup>

The new facility was licensed as a cold storage facility verses a production or manufacturing facility. Cold Storage facilities are distinguishable as buildings constructed for the sole purpose of producing or storing goods at low temperatures. Examples include food storage warehouses or production facilities for foods, such as seafood or dairy products, that must be maintained at low temperatures during processing. The 107,000 square foot building included the dairy cold storage facility as well as the parking garage annex which managed a fleet of 75 delivery trucks. The close proximity to the Nickel Plate railroad also allowed a spur to run directly to a covered platform for unloading products into the receiving room, creating a smooth and efficient distribution of Fairmont products as described in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* in 1929...

*"Here goods will be unloaded, undercover and then move in consecutive fashion through the various processes to truck loading platforms for delivery throughout Greater Cleveland. "The new location and facilities will speed up by several hours the handling of our daily consignments of perishables," said C. L. Diltz, Cleveland manager. "The latter will be shipped direct from our Chicago plant to Cleveland receiving rooms, with no necessity for automobile trucking between railroad yards and the Fairmont Co.'s plant at either point."*<sup>13</sup>

With the onset of the 1944 Federal Aid Highway Act and the introduction of the interstate highway system, the company furthered their reach into Ohio from the Cleveland location by

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<sup>11</sup> Rose, 863.

<sup>12</sup> "Start Work on Creamery Plant," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 16, 1930: Two-D.

<sup>13</sup> "Start Work on Creamery Plant," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, March 16, 1930: Two-D.

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

Cuyahoga County, OH

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expanding their product line to include additional poultry and dairy products while efficiently receiving and distributing large volumes of the Fairmont product line from the Cleveland Plant.

**Conclusion**

The Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building is significant as the only remaining Ohio cold storage distribution center built by Fairmont Creamery Company of Nebraska during the era of national industrialization of the dairy industry in the early to mid-century. On August 27, 1929, the Fairmont Creamery Company purchased the lot at the corner of Willey and West 17<sup>th</sup> Street in Cleveland and the corporate headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, began drawing plans for an Ice Cream Building and parking garage annex. In 1930, Fairmont celebrated their forty-sixth anniversary as a manufacturer of butter, cheese and dairy products. They marked the occasion by beginning work on the new Cleveland plant. Construction of the four-story creamery and two-story garage began in March of 1930. The Fairmont Creamery Company of Omaha, Nebraska was one of four national dairy companies in the United States and a Fortune 500 company which sustained itself through the Great Depression by providing essential food products to the American consumer. National distribution of dairy products was a growing industry at that time due in part to the development of refrigerated rail cars, delivery trucks, and other evolving cold storage practices. These historic trends are demonstrated at the Cleveland Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building and garage annex adjacent to the Nickel Plate Railroad – Cleveland’s Wholesale Food District.



Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building  
Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, OH  
County and State

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## **9. Major Bibliographical References**

### **Primary**

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*Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Plans*. Fairmont Creamery Company, 1930. Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

### **Secondary**

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Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

Cuyahoga County, OH

Name of Property

County and State

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"Start Work on Creamery Plant," Cleveland Plain Dealer 16 March 1930 page [2-D].

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"Fairmont Gold Nugget Ice Cream Truck." Fortney Refrigerator Body Print Ad, 1948.

**National Register Nominations & HABS**

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Williams, Judith B. "The Fairmont Creamery Company Building." Fillmore, NB: NRIS# 83003989.

Chris B. Nelson. "The Fairmont Creamery Company Building." Pennington County, SD: NRIS# 06000048.

Athan, Polly B. "Fairmont Dairy Complex." Brown Co., WI: HAER- WI-310, June 1989.

"The Fairmont Creamery Company." 608 East Milwaukee Avenue, Detroit, Wayne County, MI: HAER MI-336-1, 1968.

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building  
Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, OH  
County and State

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Cleveland State University Cleveland Press Archives, Cuyahoga County Archives, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland Public Library, Nebraska State Library

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property:** 1.55 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building  
Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, OH  
County and State

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 441868 | Northing: 4592112 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is situated in the City of Cleveland, County of Cuyahoga and State of Ohio: and known as being part of Sub Lots Nos. 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 in Alfred Kellogg's Subdivision of part of Original Brooklyn Township Lot No. 87, as shown by the recorded plat in Volume 3 of Maps, Page 20 of Cuyahoga County Records. The boundary of the historic Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Plant follows the boundary of Cuyahoga County Parcels # 004-05-001, 004-05-002, 004-05-020, 004-05-021, 004-05-022, 004-05-023, 004-05-024; property addresses 1720 Willey Avenue and 2306 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated boundary includes the property historically associated with the Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Factory since purchase of the property and construction of the building.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Diana Wellman, Principal  
organization: Preservation Principles Consulting, LLC  
street & number: 1325 Inglewood Drive  
city or town: Cleveland Hts state: OH zip code: 44121  
e-mail: diwellman@preservationprinciples.com  
telephone: 216-482-1179  
date: July 1, 2014

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building  
Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, OH  
County and State

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**See attached Continuation Sheet Additional Documentation- Location & Boundary Map**

### **Photographs**

#### **Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

**City or Vicinity:** Cleveland

**County:** Cuyahoga      **State:** OH

**Photographer:** Diana Wellman

**Date Photographed:** May 2013-14  
1 of 25.

1. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0001): West 17th Street and Willey, camera direction NW.
2. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0002): West 17th Street Façade, camera direction NW.
3. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0003): West 17th Street Façade, Office Entrance, camera direction W.
4. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0004): West 17th Street Façade, camera direction SW.
5. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0005): North Elevation, camera direction SE.
6. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0006): West Elevation, camera direction S.

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

Cuyahoga County, OH

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7. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0007): Railroad Platform, West Elevation, camera direction S.
8. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0008): Railroad Platform, West Elevation, camera direction S.
9. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0009): West Elevation, camera direction SE.
10. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0010): West Elevation, receiving platform, camera direction NE.
11. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0011): West & South Elevation converging, camera direction E.
12. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0012): Garage & Cold Storage South Elevation, camera direction N.
13. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0013): Garage & Cold Storage South Elevation, camera direction NW.
14. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0014): Basement, camera direction NE.
15. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0015): First floor, Square and Round columns distinguishing cooler and dry storage areas, camera direction NW.
16. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0016): First floor, Interior truck ramp – Garage Annex, camera direction E.
17. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0017): Second floor, Interior truck ramp – Garage Annex, camera direction W.
18. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0018): Second floor, Fire Door, Between Cold Storage and Garage Annex, camera direction SW.
19. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0019): Second Floor dry storage area, camera direction W.
20. (OH\_Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0020): Second Floor dry storage area, camera direction SW.

Fairmont Creamery Company Ice Cream Building

Cuyahoga County, OH

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21. (OH\_ Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0021): Second Floor dry storage area, camera direction NE.
22. (OH\_ Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0022): Third Floor, Garage Doors, West 17th St. Elevation, camera direction E.
23. (OH\_ Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0023): Fourth Floor, Office area, Print Room, camera direction SW.
24. (OH\_ Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0024): Stair, camera direction S.
25. (OH\_ Cuyahoga\_FairmontCreameryCompanyIceCreamBuilding\_0025): Office Stair, camera direction W.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**FAIRMONT CREAMERY CO. ICE CREAM BUILDING**  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Additional Documentation - Location & Boundary Map



**LEGEND**

- BOUNDARY/SITE
- BUILDING
- PHOTO ARROW





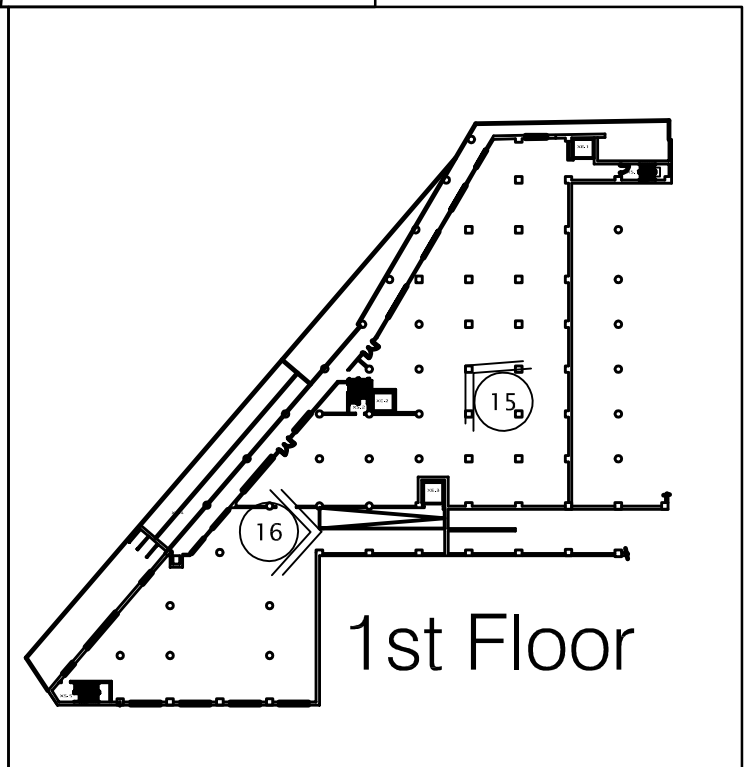
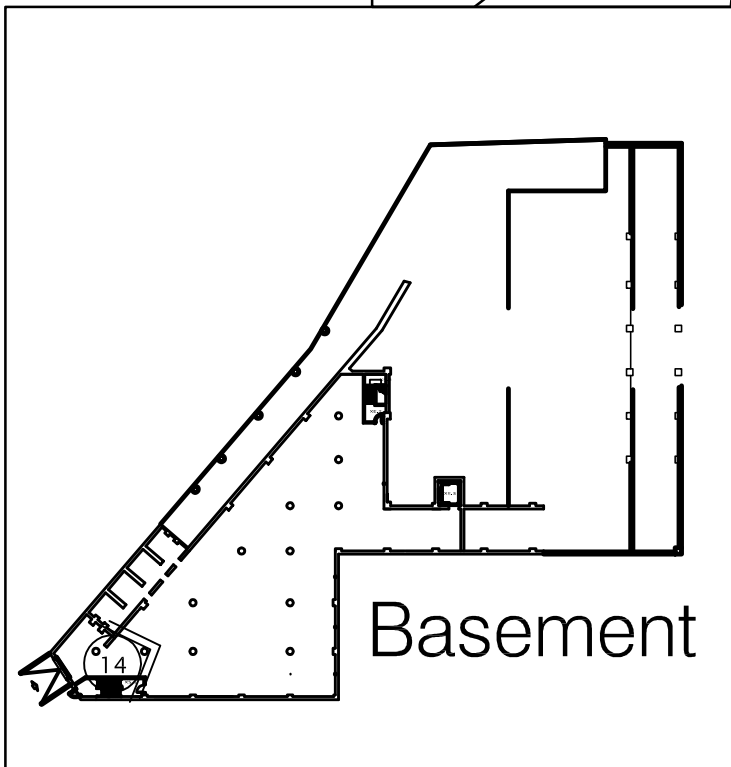
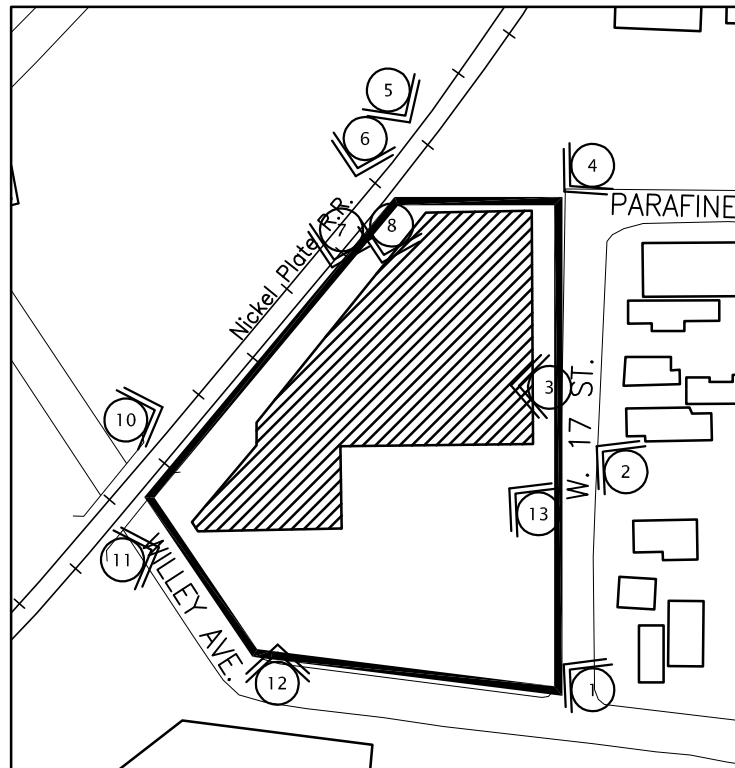
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National Park Service

**FAIRMONT CREAMERY CO. ICE CREAM BUILDING**

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Additional Documentation - Photo-Key Page 2



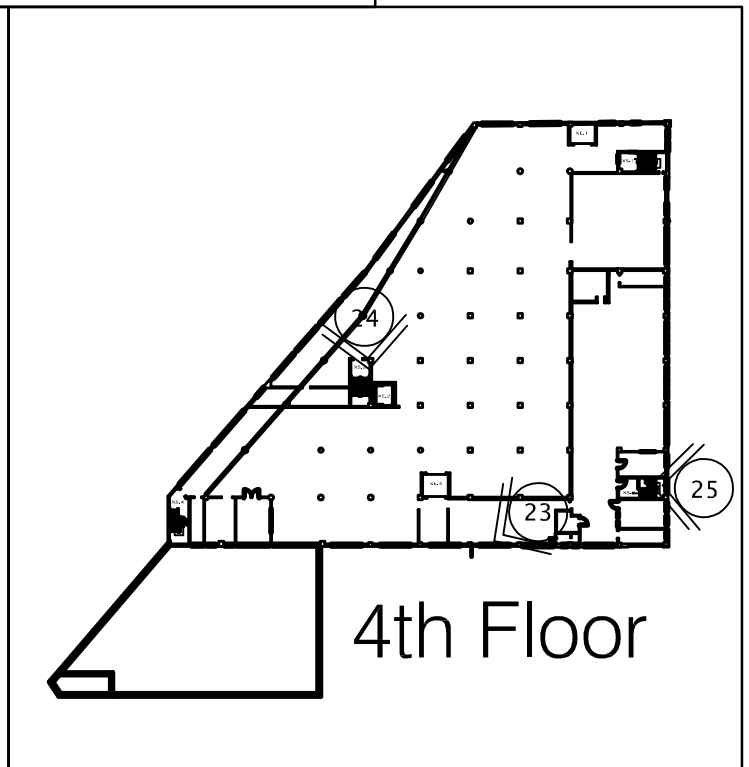
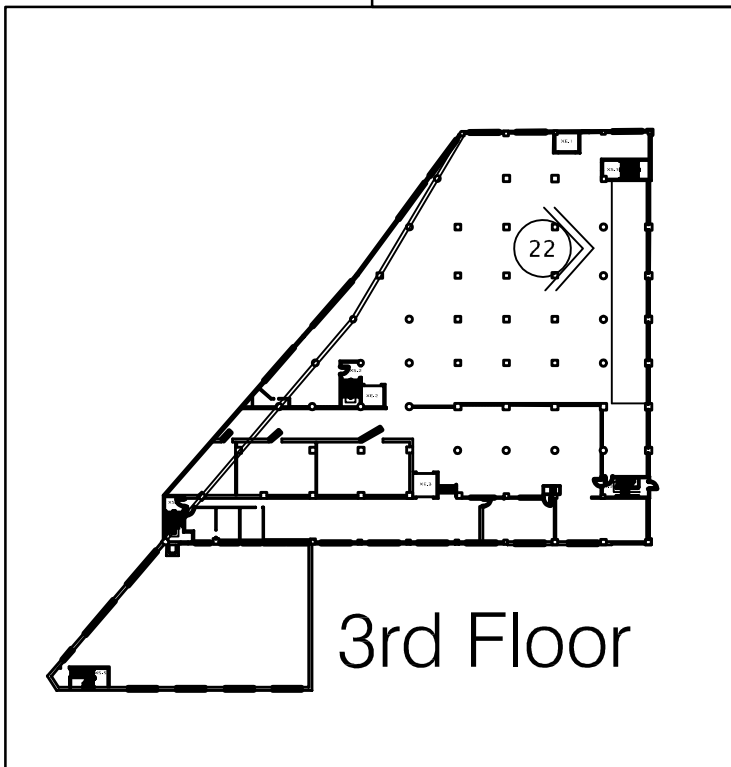
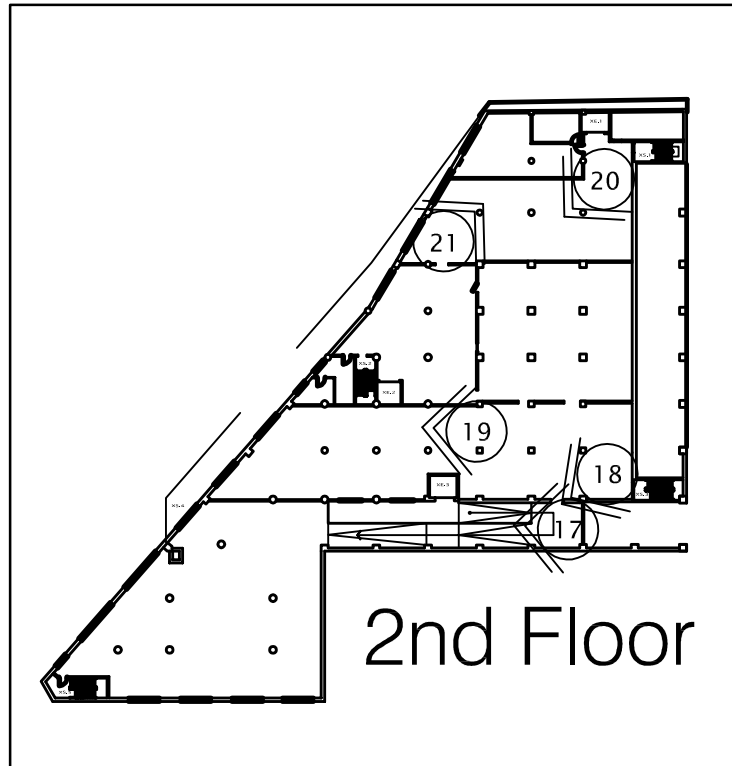
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National Park Service

**FAIRMONT CREAMERY CO. ICE CREAM BUILDING**

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Additional Documentation - Photo-Key Page 3

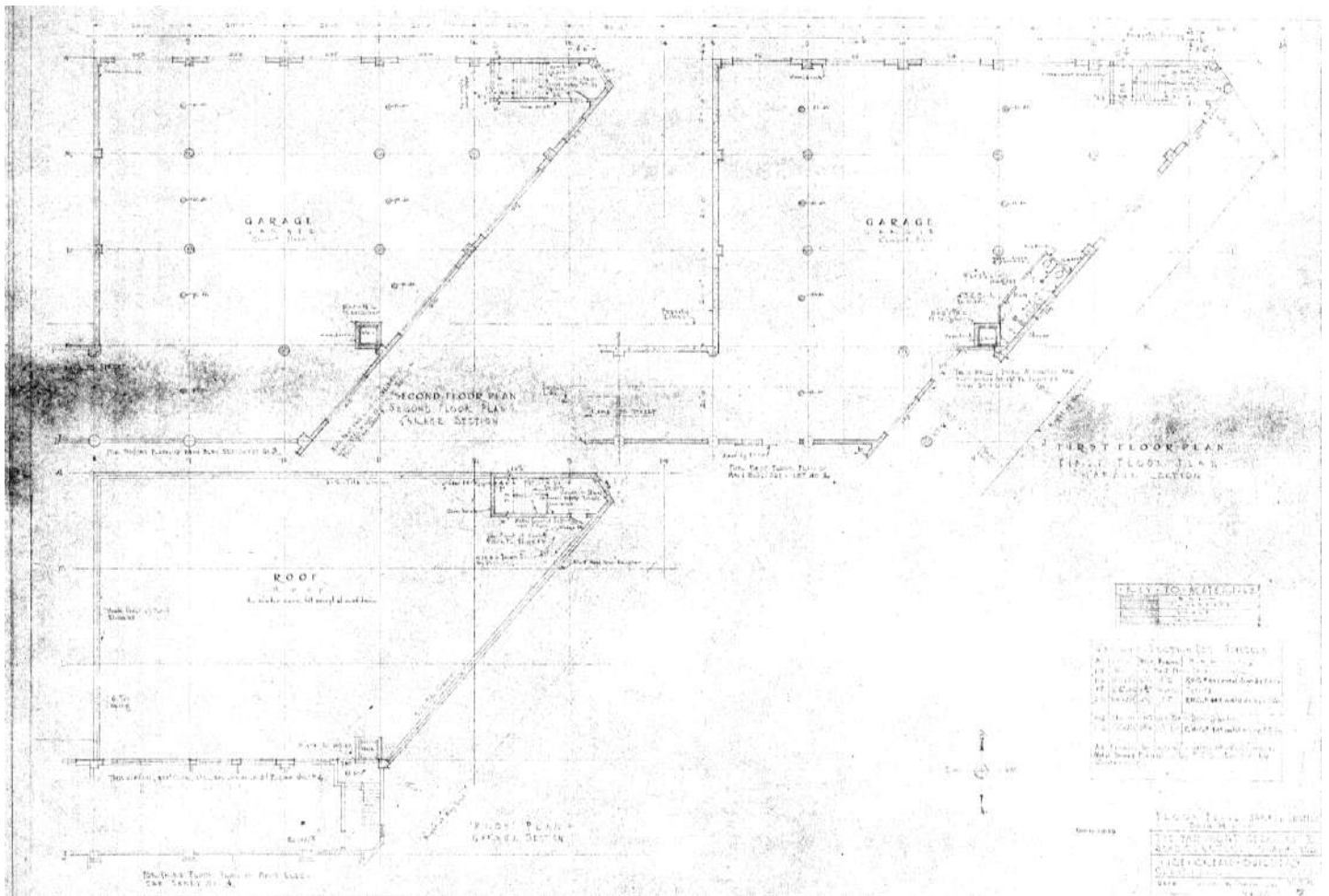


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National Park Service

**Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 1



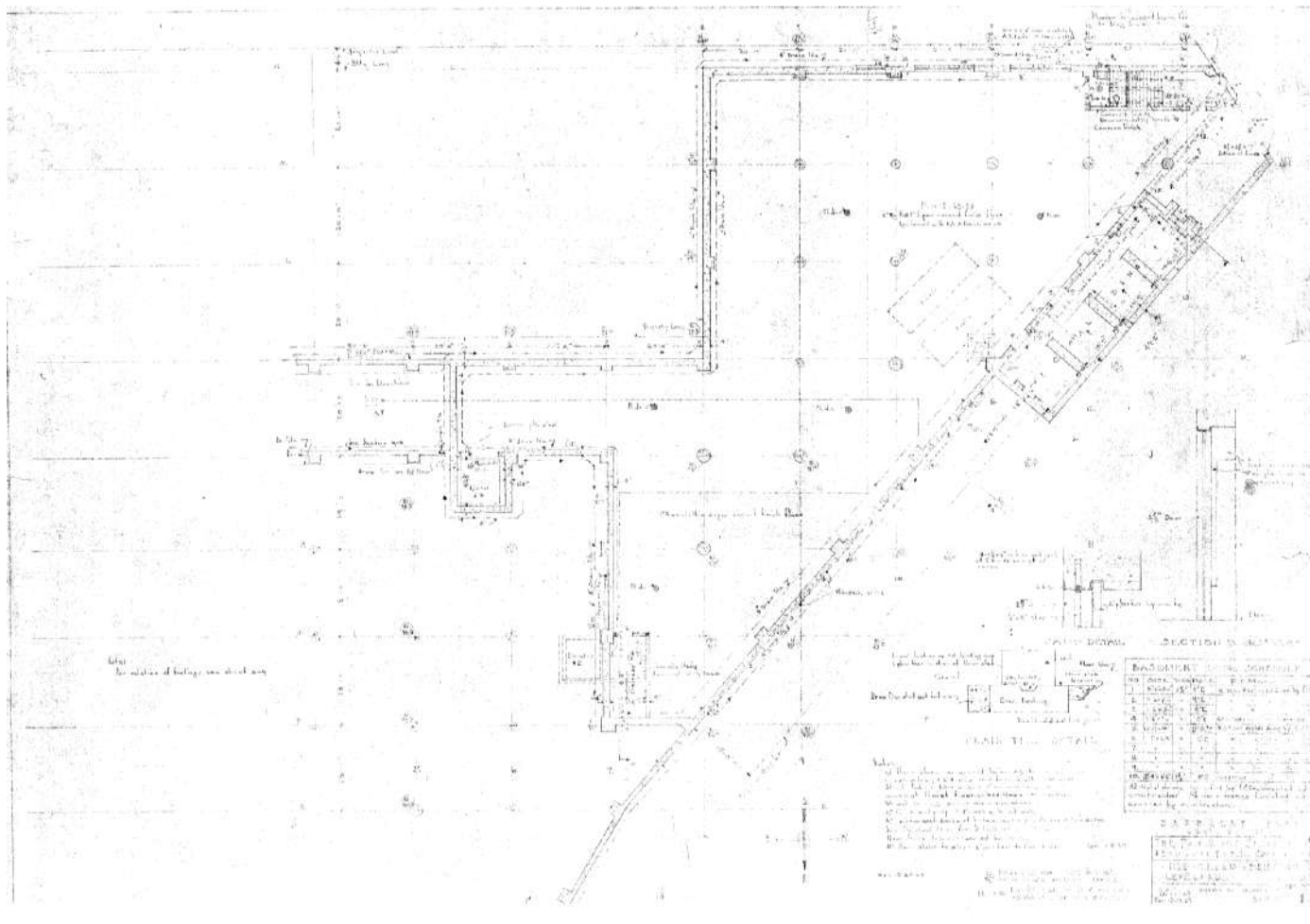
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Garage Annex Plans, 1930.  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 2



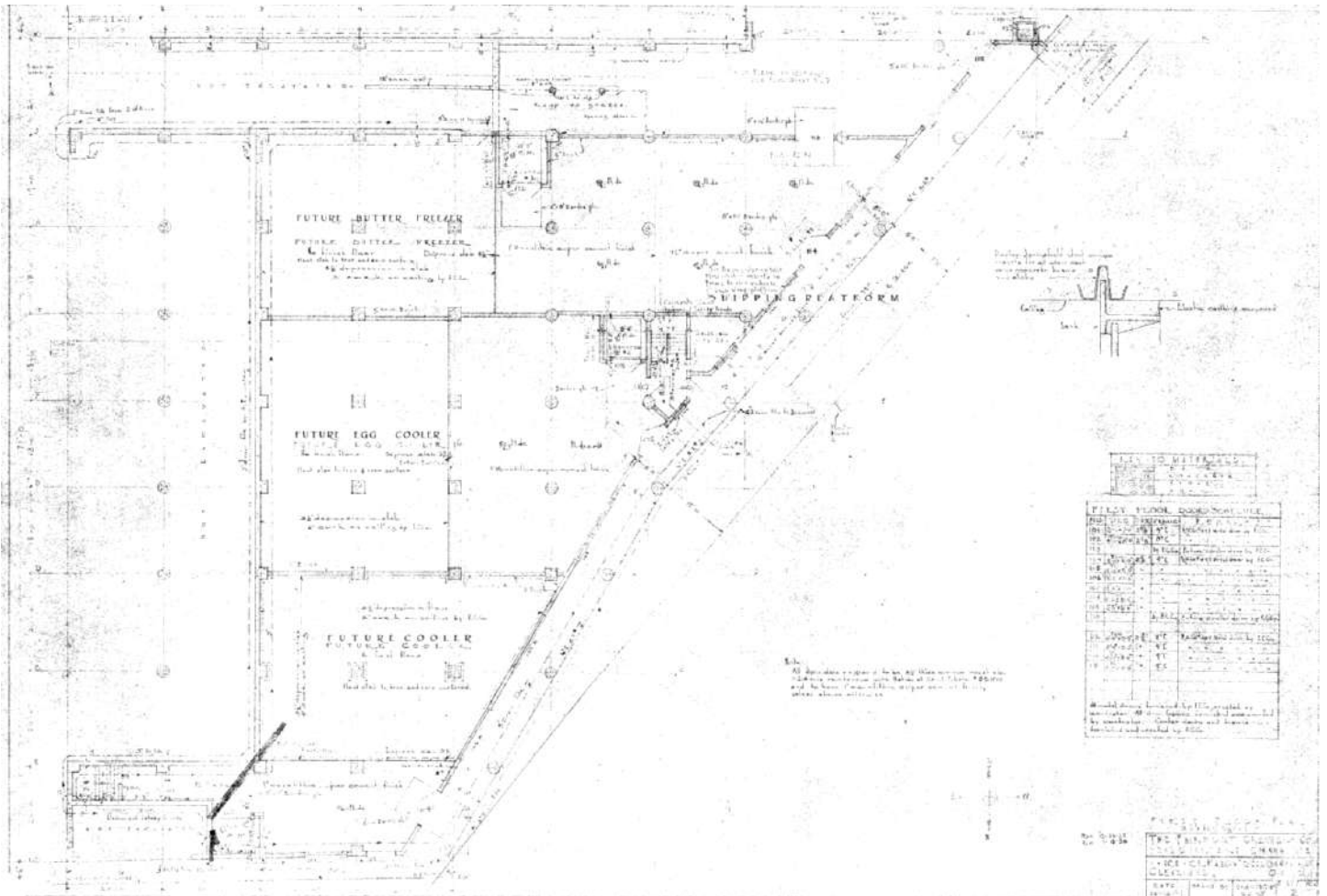
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Basement Floor Plan, 1930.  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 3



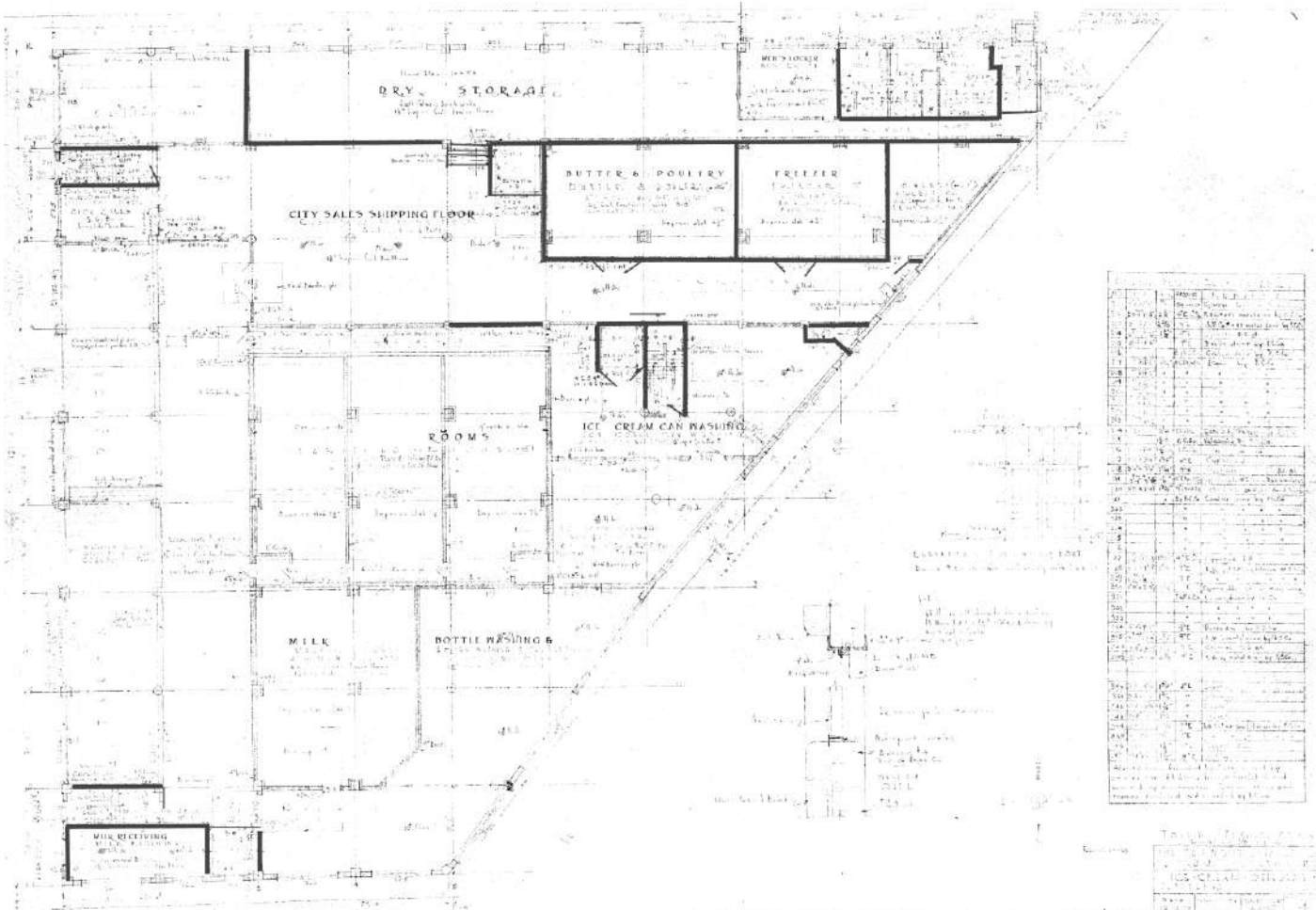
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, First Floor Plan, 1930.  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

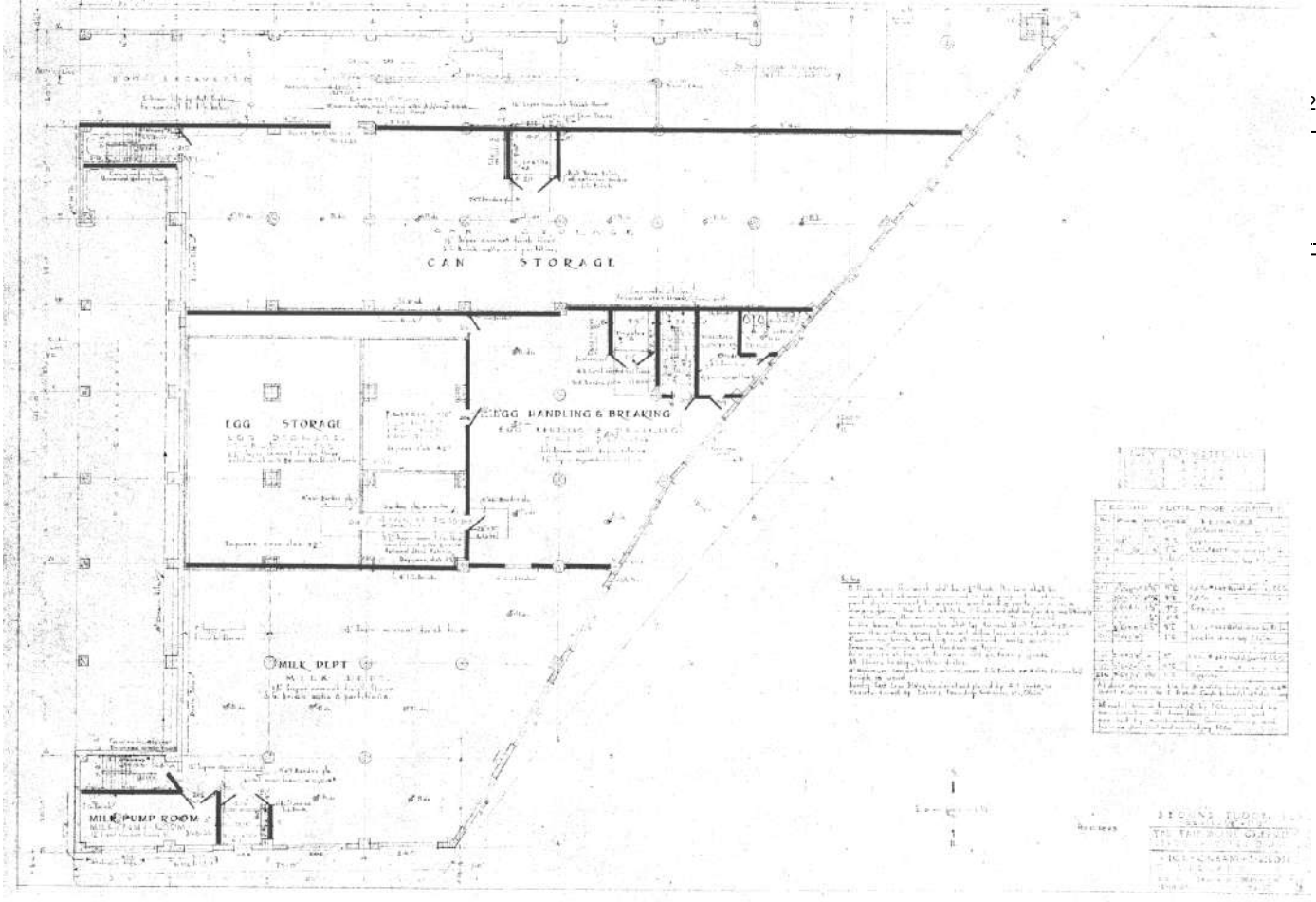
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Second Floor Plan, 1930. \*  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

\* bold delineation indicate interior historic fabric remaining



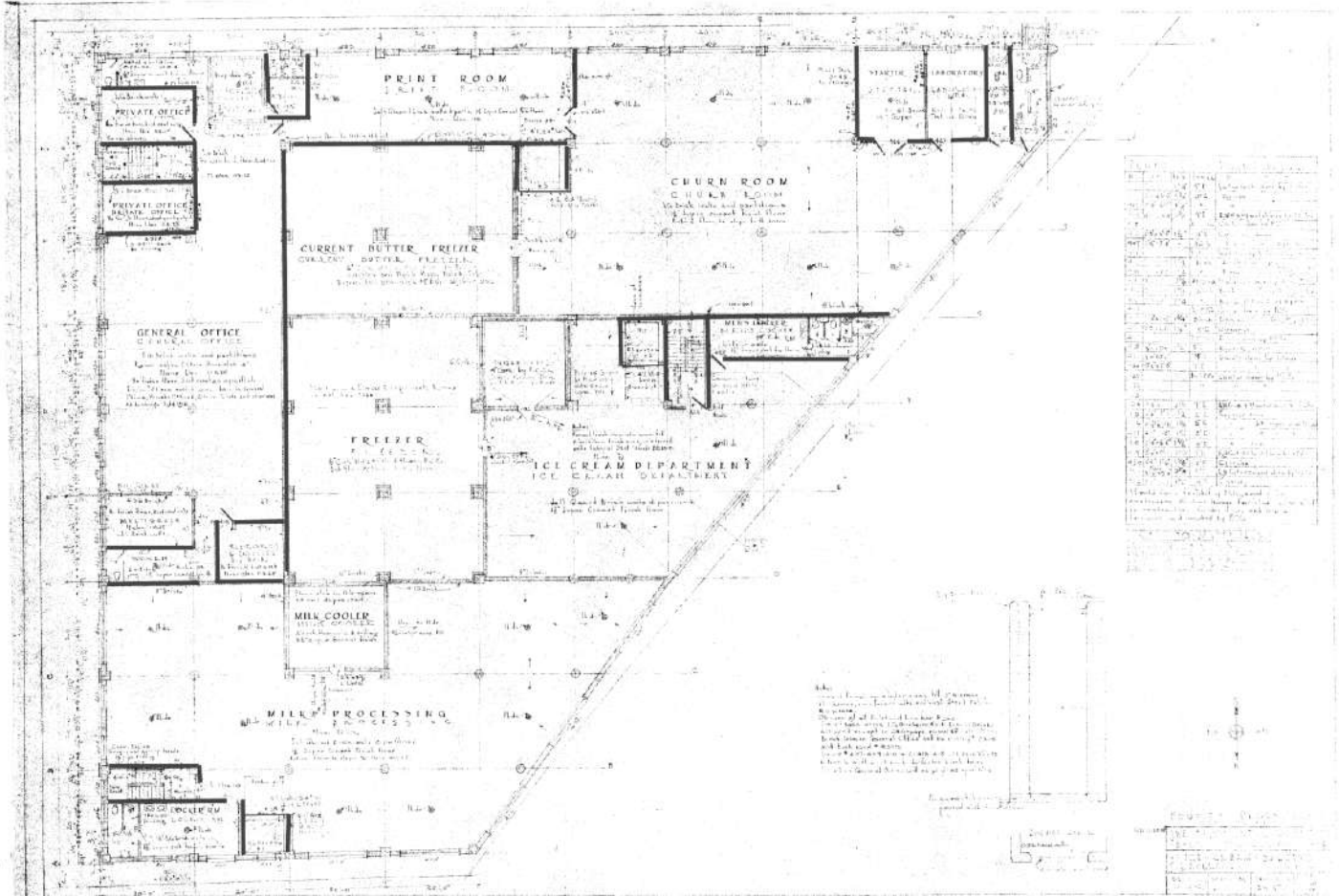
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Third Floor Plan, 1930. \*  
 Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

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Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 6



Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Fourth Floor Plan, 1930. \*  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

\* bold delineation indicate interior historic fabric remaining

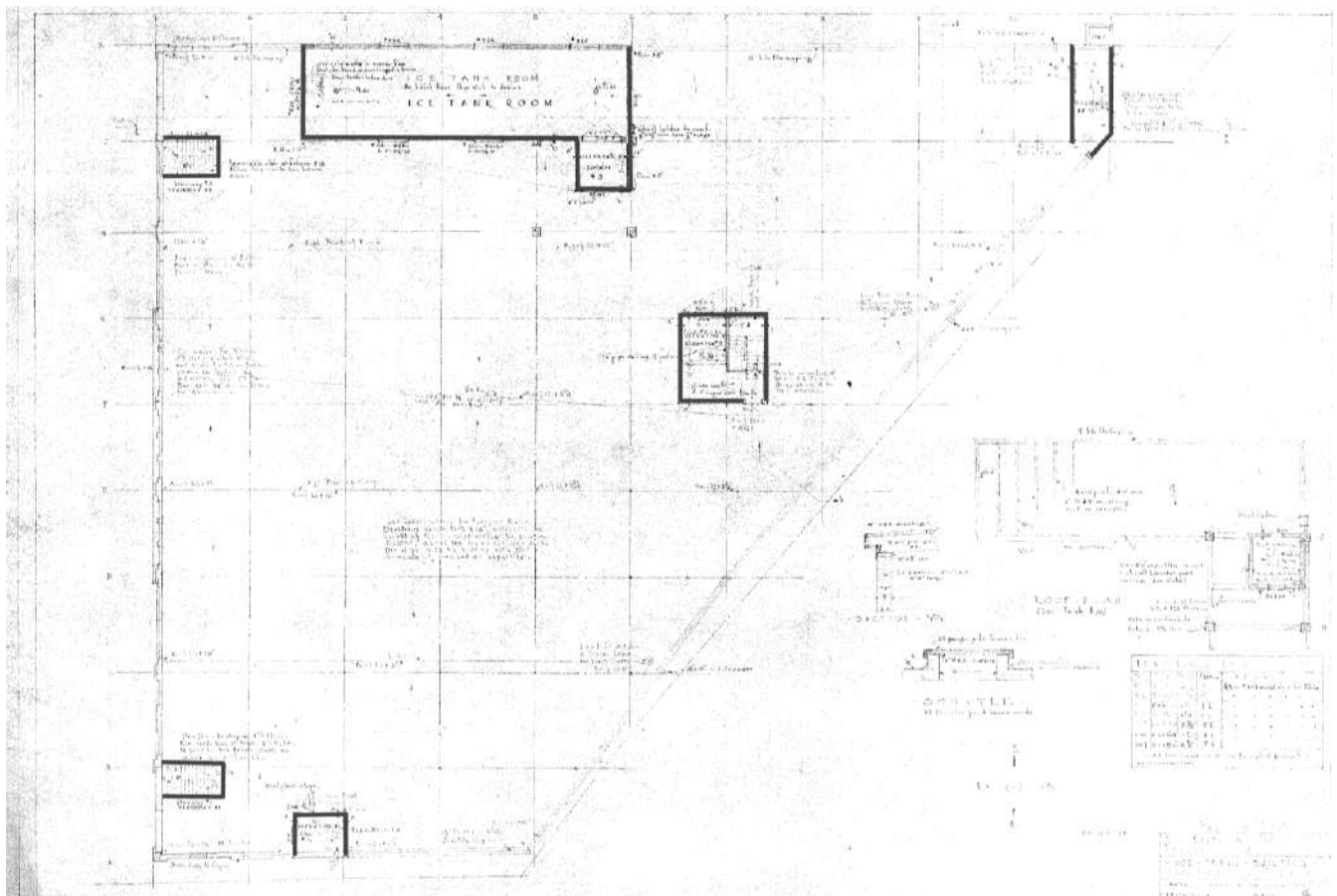


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**Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 7



Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Roof Plan, 1930. \*  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

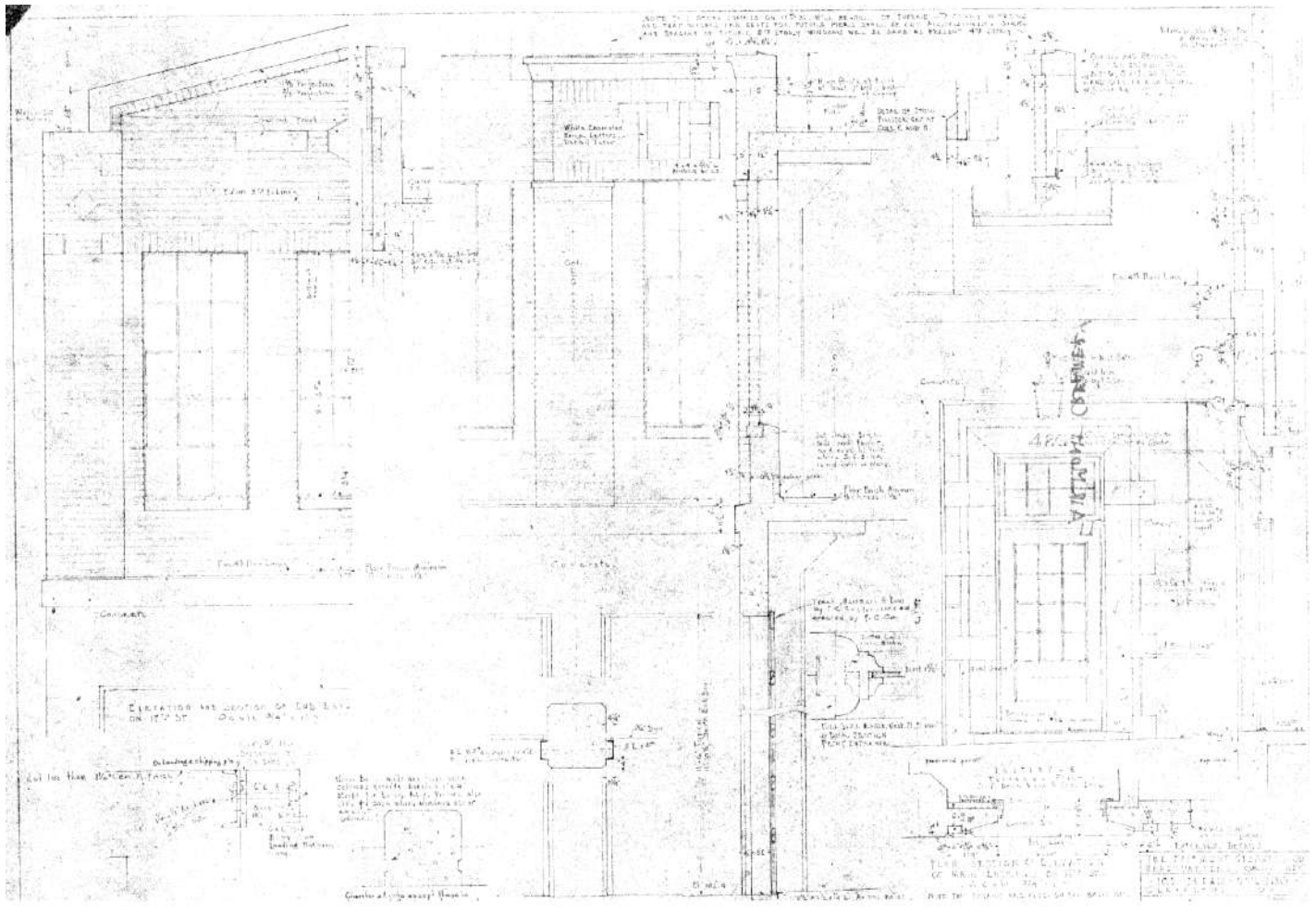
\* bold delineation indicate interior historic fabric remaining

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**Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 8



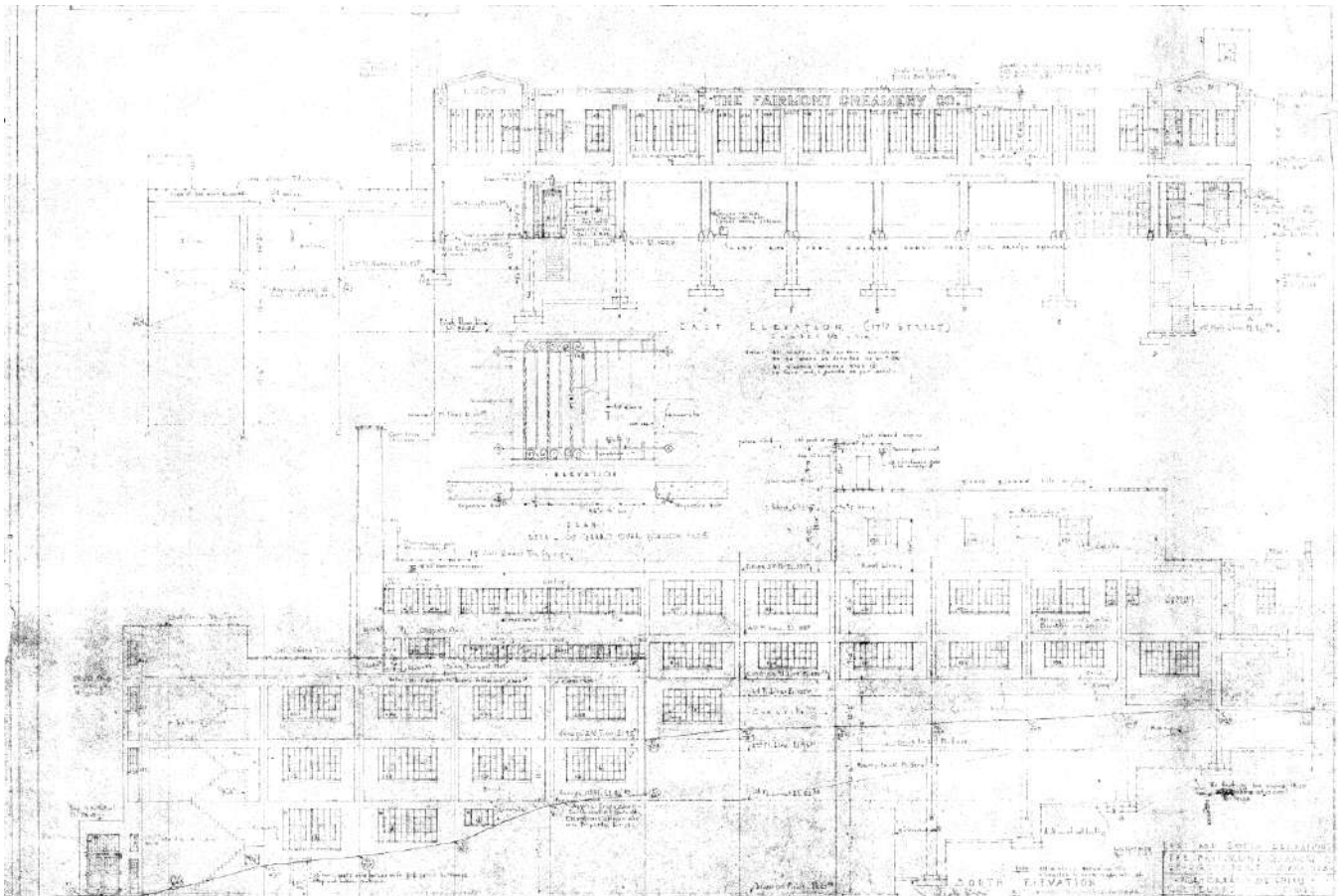
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Architectural Details, 1930.  
Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

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Section Number Historic Photographs Page 9



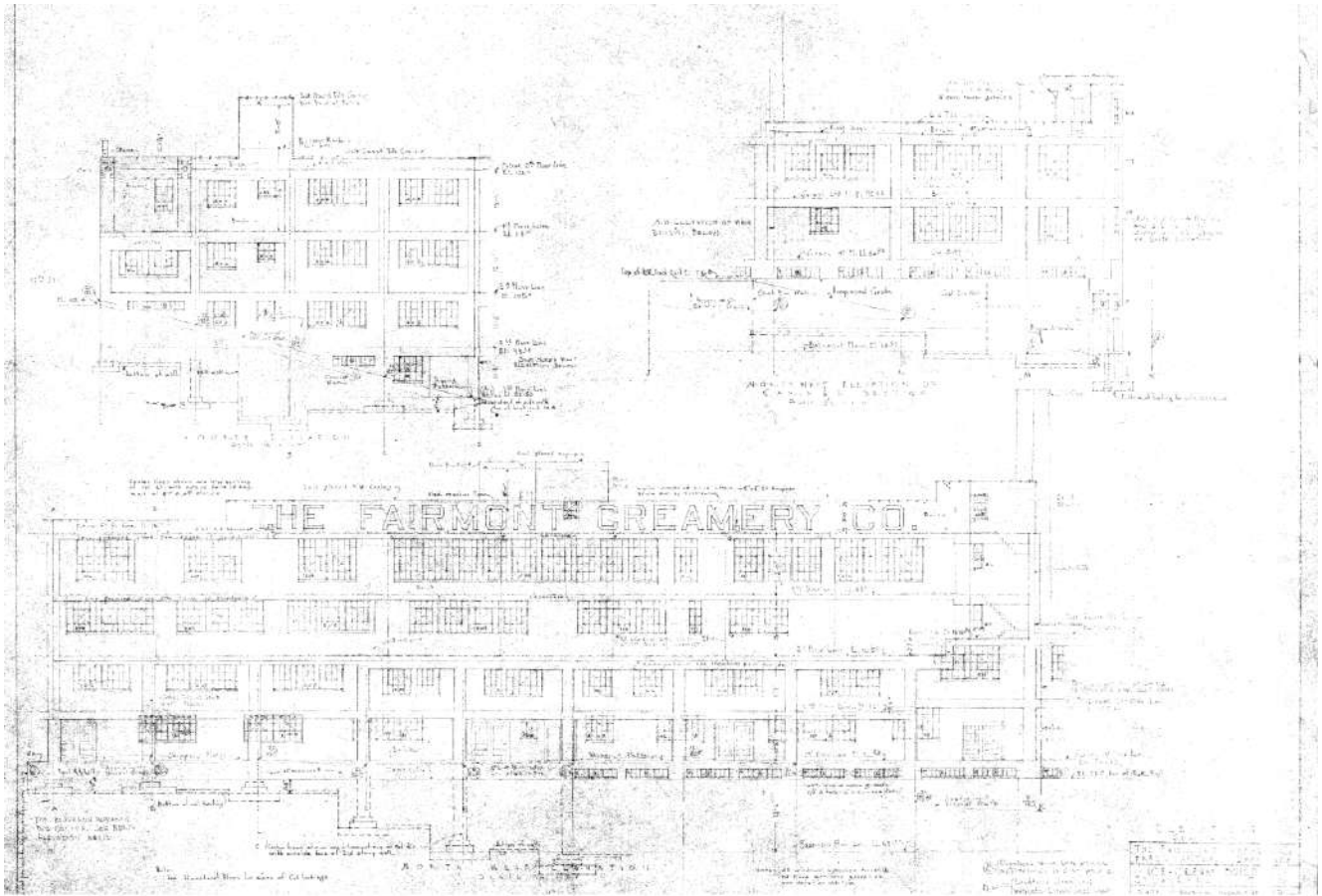
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Façade (East Elevation) & South Elevation, 1930. Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

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National Park Service**

**Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 10



Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, North Elevation & West Elevation, 1930. Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

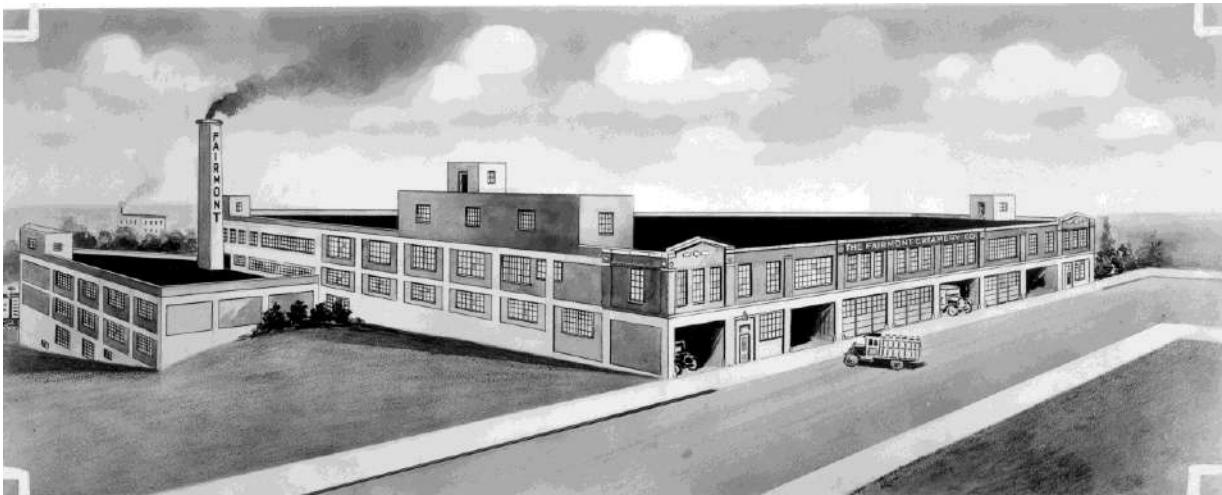
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**Fairmont Creamery Co.**  
**Ice Cream Building**  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 11

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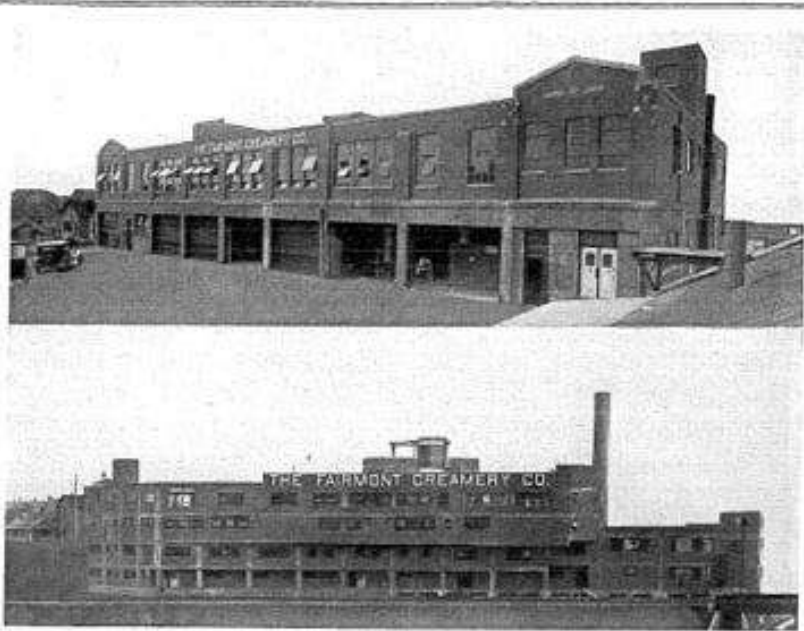
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Rendering, 1929, Cleveland Public Library, Photograph Location.

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National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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**Views of the New Creamery Under Construction at Cleveland**

**T**HE upper view of the new plant is the West 17th Street side where spacious covered docks are provided for loading of trucks. The lower view gives an idea of size. It is nearly a block long and five stories high. The railroad docks are located on this side and are at the second floor level.

Ample space will be provided for separate ice cream, butter, egg, milk and poultry departments, service quarters and office.

Manufacturing rooms and freezers are lined with sand glazed tile and the building is constructed of reinforced concrete and brick. The plant is one of the largest in the Fairmont system and will be ready for occupancy in January 1931.

THE FAIRMONT CREAMERY COMPANY

Fairmont Creamery Company Brochure. Courtesy of Sustainable Community Associates.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 13



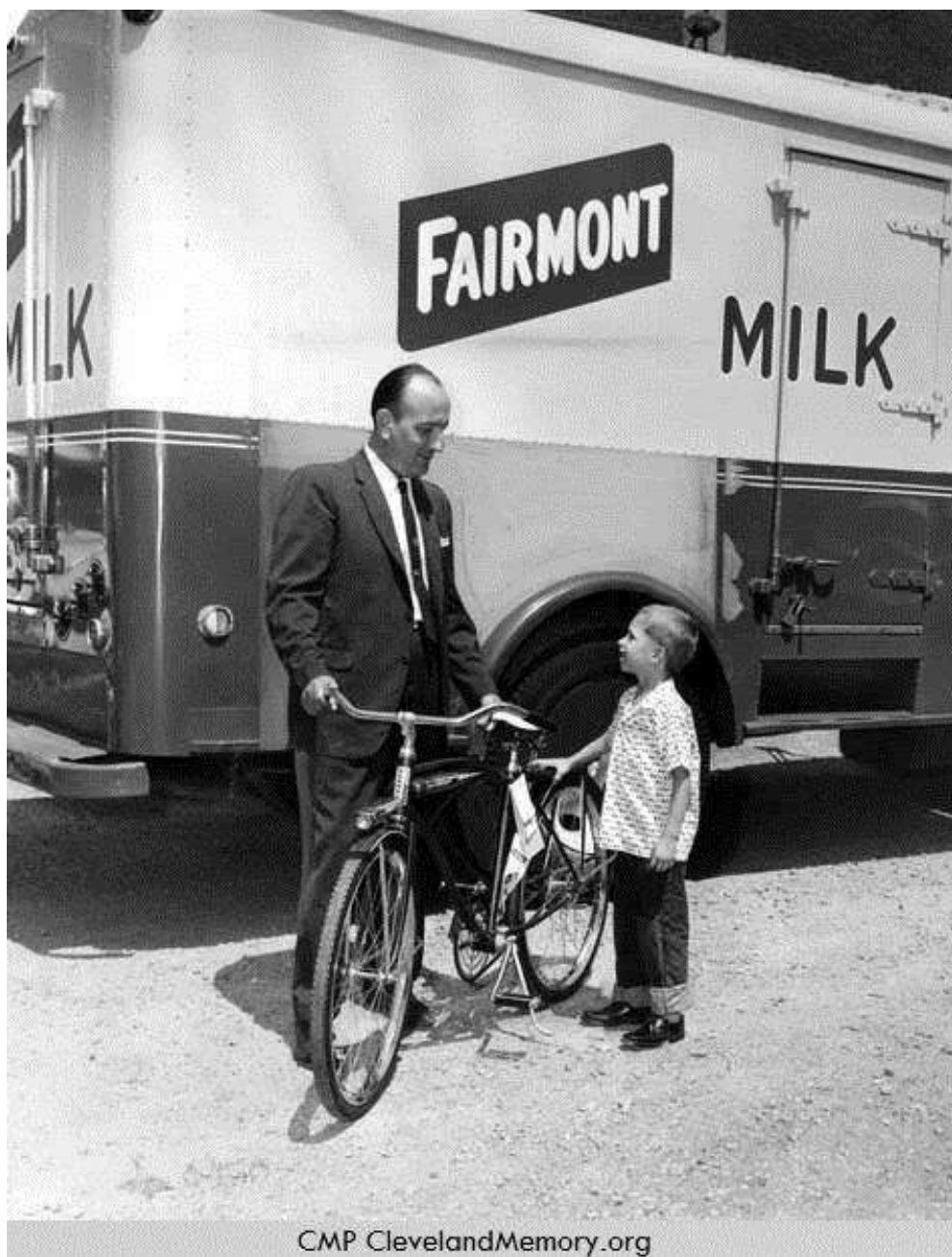
Fairmont Creamery Company, Ice Cream Building, Cleveland, Rendering, circa 1931, America Truck Historical Society.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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CMP ClevelandMemory.org

Bicycle presented to Douglas Brown by Walter Roebuck, Fairmont Foods sales manager. Winner of the "Draw the Eskimo Pie Boy" Art contest, 1961, Cleveland Press Collection.

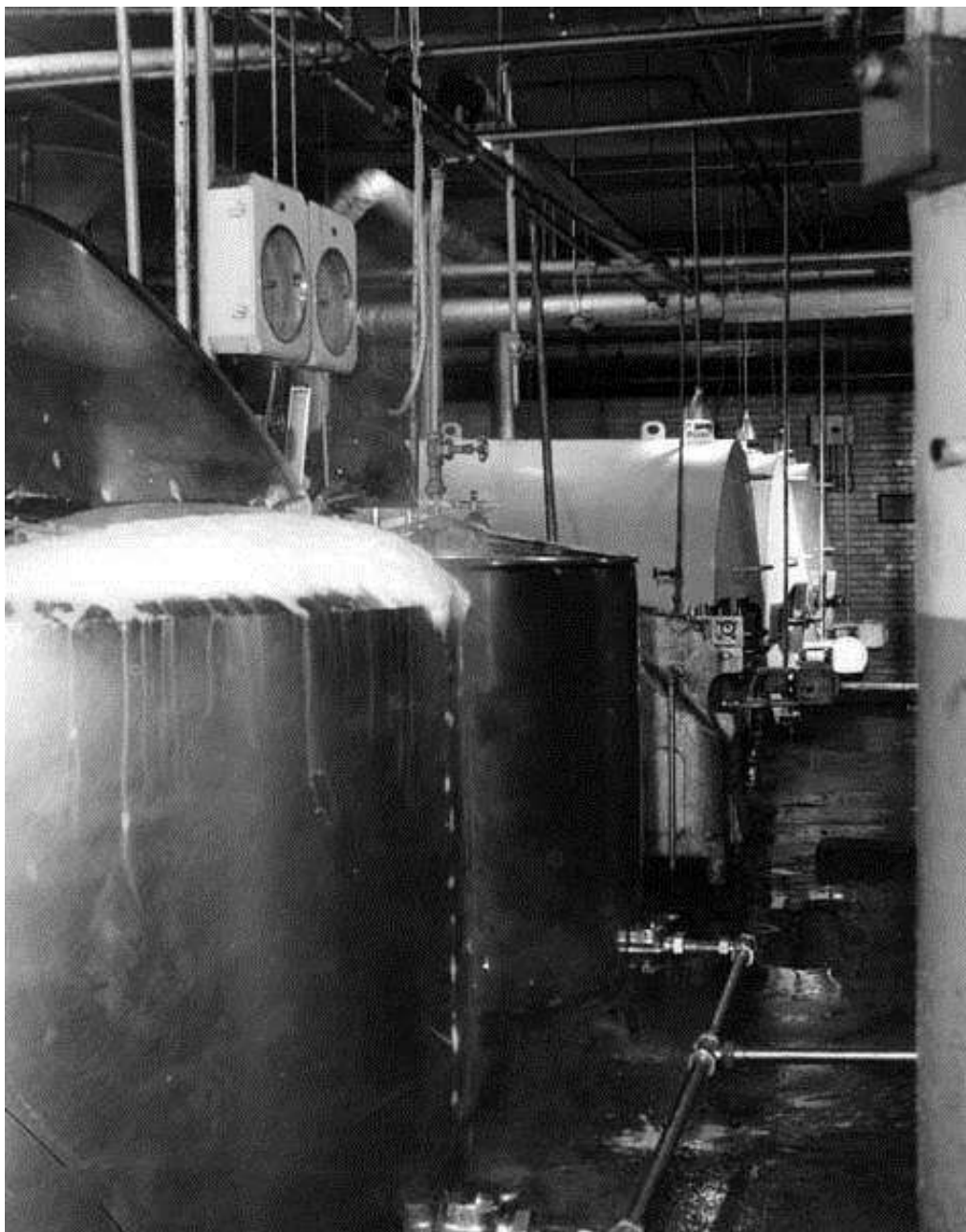


**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**Fairmont Creamery Co.**  
**Ice Cream Building**  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 15



CMP ClevelandMemory.org

Fairmont Creamery Ice Cream Storage Tanks, Thomas, James, 1945 Cleveland Press Collection.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

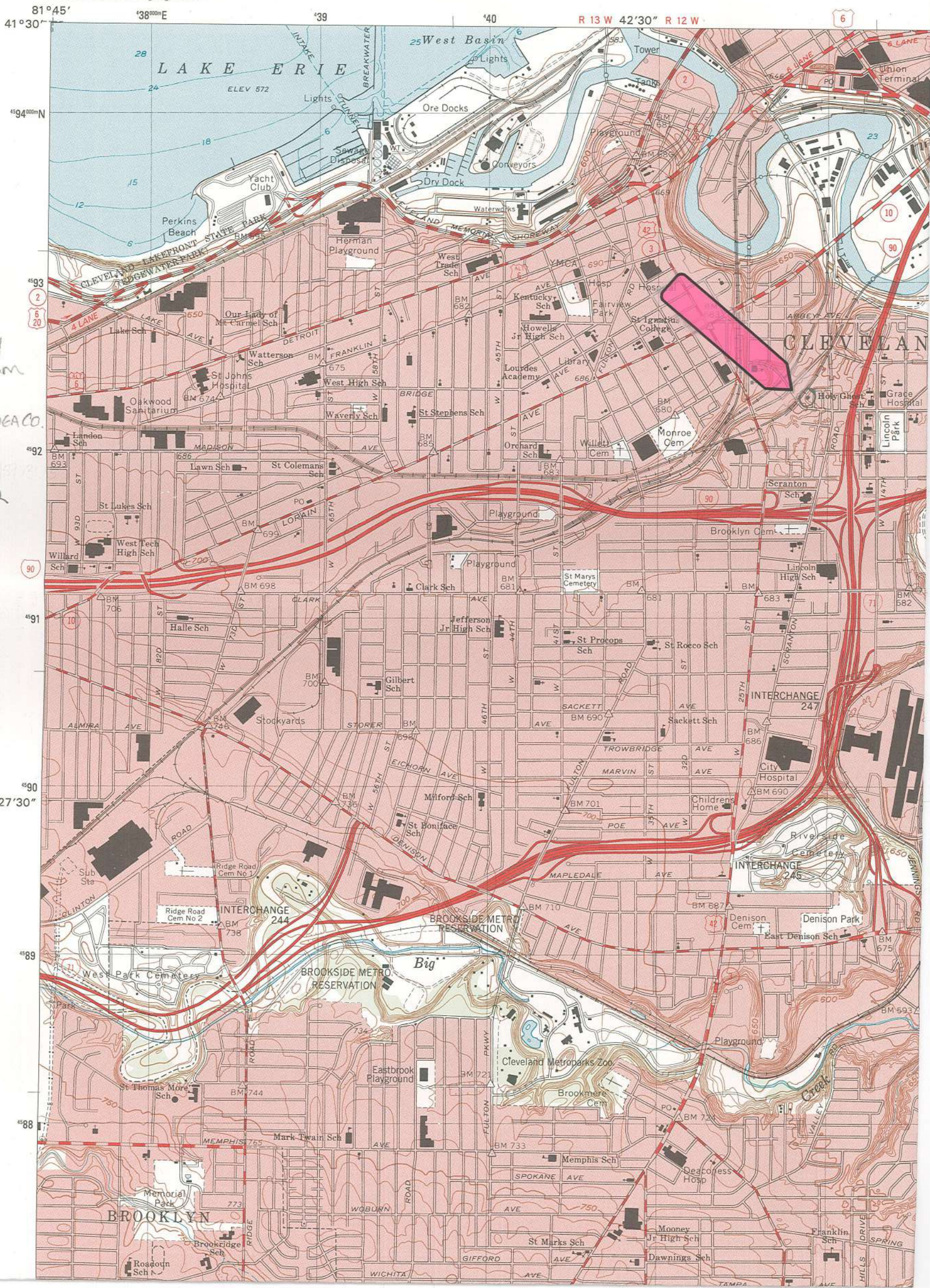
Fairmont Creamery Co.  
Ice Cream Building  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number Historic Photographs Page 16



Fairmont Creamery Cleveland, "Fairmont Creamery - breakers - even they make little dent in supply", Kneal, Walter, 1944, Cleveland Press Collection.



FAIRMONT CREAMERY  
COMPANY ICE CREAM  
BUILDING  
CLEVELAND, CUYAHOGA CO.  
OHIO  
UTM 17 441868  
4592112